Capital investment in business houses

† 1182. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN*:

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have ascertained the capital investment made in the business houses relating to Information Technology during the last few years;

(b) if so, what was the capital investment in such business houses as on 31st March, 1999, 2000 and 2001 respectively; and

(c) the annual dividend rate on the capital investment during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) No such assessment has been made by the Government.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Reduction in STD, ISD rates

1183. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the sad plight of the PCO operators, due to steep reduction in STD/ISD rates and proliferation of mobile phones and Virtual Calling Cards;

(b) whether it is also a fact that most of the PCO operators take out a living solely by the commission earned from PCO operatioi as their earnings have declined;

(c) whether the Federation of PCO operators in the country has represented for plight of its members and sought

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

immediate relief measures through enhanced commission on telecom tariff handled by them; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (d) The STD call charges for intra circle calls were reduced with effect from 14th January, 2002 as an additional package for the benefit of the users of telecom services. In the present scenario of competition among all the service providers, when long distance operation has been opened to private sectors, the call charges are bound to fall. Consequent to the reduction in these tariffs, representations from various sources including Federation of PCO operators in the country were received to increase the commission on PCOs and service charges. However, no guarantee whatsoever was given to the franchisees, for any definite earnings or income out of operation of Local/STD/ISD/PCOs. Even in the agreement signed with the franchisees, this aspect has been made very clear. At present, there is no proposal to enhance the rate of commission to the franchisees. Moreover, with reduction in rates, the traffic is expected to go up. In fact, observations taken in February indicate that while rates have been brought down by around 60%, the metered call units have gone down by only 20% clearly indicating the compensatory effect of the increased traffic.

Penalty imposed by courts in U.P.

† 1184. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of officers and employees of Telecommunications Nigam in U.P. have been found guilty by some of the courts and consumer protection fora for negligence;

(b) whether these courts have punished them and imposed a

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